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where Mr. Hume's terminates. It is not that this later period which he has chosen offers a more tempting field for the historian, or that his previous studies had rendered him more familiar with it; on the contrary, the reigns of Elizabeth and of the first three Stuarts are far more varied in interest, open a wider range of characters and events, and are altogether a more suitable theme for the exercise of Mr. Macaulay's talents than the period beginning with the accession of James the Second. Hume's account of the last of the Stuarts is confessedly a mere sketch, thrown in at the end of a work which properly terminates at the death of Charles the Second, and is certainly executed with less care and finish than the body of the history. Yet here only does Macaulay venture to come in competition with him, and the progress of the former's work will lead him far out of the track of his formidable rival. He evidently prefers to be a continuator of Hume rather than to wrestle with him on his own ground.

It is with great propriety, then, that the Boston publishers have put forth a very neat library edition of Hume, to match in every respect with their popular reprint of Macaulay. The size of the volumes is that which is most convenient to be held in the hands, and read without support either from table or desk; and their mechanical execution is quite elegant enough to satisfy the modest taste of those who are obliged to count the cost in their purchases of books. They are not rich enough to serve as ornaments to the drawing-room and centre-table, a use to which too many good books are now degraded; but they will not disgrace the corner of a book-shelf, and they can be read without peril to the eyesight. To multiply serviceable editions of standard works, being a greater service to literature in this country than to publish novelties which have nothing to recommend them but their novelty, we have thought it right to say thus much in commendation of the publishers' enterprise.

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3. *The Horse-Shoe: a Poem spoken before the Phi Beta Kappa Society in Cambridge, July 19th, 1849.* By JOHN BROOKS FELTON. Cambridge: John Bartlett. 1849. 16mo. pp. 29.

THIS little poem shows a delicate appreciation of rhythm, a rich fancy, and an abundant command of language. It is written for the most part in the old English heroic couplet, a perilous measure for the youthful poet, as it constantly tempts him to fill

out the lines to the requisite length with expletives or with feeble and unmeaning phrases. Mr. Felton shuns this danger very successfully; each couplet, taken by itself, is vigorous and clear, and answers all the requisitions of harmony and sense without any incumbrance from needless words, or any violation of the laws of idiom. The chief fault of the poem — and it is a serious, if not a fatal, one — is that the paragraphs, if not the couplets, are strung together without any apparent connection with each other or with the topic announced. The whole appears like a series of unconnected extracts taken at random from various poems, and thrown into a heap without any law of association to bind the several parts into one consistent whole. There is no progress of thought, and no proper conclusion; the only reason for coming to an end at all seems to have been that the poet was tired, or had no more time. We dwell with emphasis on this defect, because it vitiates nine-tenths of the fugitive poetry of the present day. It is no difficult task to fabricate any number of couplets or stanzas, each one of which shall be pretty and musical, and perhaps convey a pleasing image, or be marked with an ingenious turn of expression. But if they do not evolve a natural succession of thoughts, all of which are closely and plainly related to one topic, they no more constitute a poem than a cart load of bricks does a house. They are not even the raw material of poetry; for the manufacturer's stock must all be selected with reference to the particular fabric that he designs to produce. He instantly rejects any article, however choice and precious in itself, which is not suited for that one fabric. The thoughts that voluntarily move harmonious numbers must be consistent and mutually dependent thoughts, bound together by obvious trains of association; otherwise, the process seems to be reversed; the numbers seem to move the thoughts, and the only associations are of sound instead of sense.

We make a short extract, several images in which would appear even strikingly beautiful, if they did not wholly overlie and conceal the leading idea.

“ Sent from the Ark, the dove, with timid flight,
Strove through the storms, yet found not where to light;
Pursued by winds o'er restless Ocean's roar,
Back to the Flood-tossed crew no leaf she bore.
So through the Past man's tempest-driven mind
Sent Fancy forth some resting-place to find;
O'er bush, tree, hill, she winged her trackless way,
Nor foothold found her weary flight to stay;
Back o'er the sea on terror-haunted air
She flew, to tell the tidings of despair; —

Again she flies for fairer forms to seek,
And lo! the olive borne upon her beak!
Hear her glad news; — she rested on the tomb,
Saw the dawn break, and flit the ancient gloom;
Through night she swept, and heard the gentle fall
Of angel footsteps in its silent hall;
Upborne from earth, in strong and joyous flight,
Fearless she sought the empyrean height, —
Gazed on the source whence pours the living ray
On earth's time-shadows, God's eternal day."

"And not in vain this striving of the soul
To burst her bondage, and to grasp the whole:
The bird, when memory stirs his little breast
Of heavenward flight, green tree, and wind-rocked nest, —
Of song that hailed the sun ere fled the star, —
But chafes his pinion 'gainst the prison-bar;
In vain he hymns the woodland, lake, and hill,
And captive yearnings make more sweet his trill;
No mate, responsive to his warbling, flies,
With him his grief begins, with him it dies."

"But when the soul has glimpse of brighter day,
And frets to burst its dungeon-wall of clay,
By earnest striving are its wings made strong,
And earnest yearnings give new power to song.
From other hearts come echoes to the strain
That breathes, This life is but a captive pain.
So, to the fuel that it feeds on bound,
Leaps the live flame to pierce the dark profound,
Darts quivering up, retreats again to try,
Through sooty vista, for a glimpse of sky;
Still, as its rage the crackling log consumes,
The more it strives, the more its light illumines,
While other flames upspring in spiral dance,
And radiate warmth with every upward glance."